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Ms Royce Dickens
Federal Communications Commission
Common Carrier Bureau
2033 M Street, N W
Room 404-F
Washington, D.C

12/14/98

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Dear Ms. Dickens;

Thank you for including the included comments in the public record of the hearings regarding the proposed merger between AT&T and TCI Cable.
Thank you for your guidance.

Sincerely,


Greg Scott, Director, MediaSafe

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List A B C D E

Dear Federal Communications Commission;

The substantive elements of the Mediasafe perspective relative to the merger hearings to be held by the FCC on Dec 14th can be summarized as follows:

1) Universal Access- for public interest messaging

The current discussions about future carriers' of entertainment and information access paints a picture of multiple choices for the consumer. This positive marketplace approach has the downside effect of obviating 'blanket coverage' of the nation for public interest messaging. Future configurations of the information age must include a close eye on the practical delivery of public interest information in the future information environment, given that the centralized programming model of the first 50 years of media will continue to be replaced by a more fractious media source environment.

Mediasafe perspective: Caregivers and self-help programs' information should become the focus of individual medias when constructing the functional operation plan for Public Service Announcement policy. An industry panel should be formed to prioritize market driven solutions for conducting 'outreach' that is effective for the needs of social agencies. Current, in-place, media solutions place fund-raising and volunteer procurement ahead of outreach messaging. This set of priorities needs to be re-balanced.

2) Specialized media delivery - for multi-tier cable information service

Information needs and entertainment needs are inherently different for specific groups of Americans seeking medical, employment, housing and myriad other resources to improve their lives. A listing of these sub-groups includes:

Veterans	Homeless families, men, women	Teenage runaways/throwaways
Immigrants	Drug & Alcohol abusers	Physical abuse victims
Victims of crime	Unemployed/Underemployed	Medically Uninsured
Ex-offenders	Low Income Seniors	Pregnant Teens
Homebound	The mentally ill	Children
Low income families & individuals		Disabled persons

Information is both an economic and therapeutic need for the millions in these sub-groups.

Mediasafe perspective: Variations in point of delivery access to cable system programming should be explored. Specialized media delivery systems such as Mediasafe Street TV can interlace current public access cable system programming with new public viewing TV monitors placed strategically within communities.

3) Media's strategic compliment to social programs' policy and specific social legislation

Legislation such as the Veterans' Benefit Act of 1997 under Sec 1774 mandates specific outreach activities. In 1998, outreach has been publicly discussed by the President's health advisory staff, officers of HUD, Health & Human Services and others with regard to two additional already funded laws. These are the expansion of seniors' benefits under Medicare, for which a mass mailing of 42 million was undertaken in an outreach effort. And, the Children's Health Improvement Program (CHIP), under the Balanced Budget Act funding for uninsured benefits for category eligible children. The Medicare legislation is estimated to have the potential to help as many as 8 million seniors, while CHIP is estimated to help 6 million children. Experts have cited that the seniors who will not be reached with useful information about this program will be as many as 4 million. Similarly, uninsured children who are eligible but not reached may number as many as 1.5 million.

Mediasafe perspective: These laws must be met halfway by culture-wide strategies in media to compliment legislators' intentions that are representative of the American will. The sum total of all current media superstructure available for public interest information is currently a worrisome ingredient in the formulation of national and local public social policy. This circumstance needs to be immediately addressed in the interest of streamlining legislators' intent-to-goal accomplishment timeline.

4) Local community involvement as a no-cost resource to media

Medias have a fiscal need to maintain budgets with regard to locally generated public interest programming. A laissez faire approach to the collection of local public service programs exists at many local media programming facilities. Community information outreach needs of local caregivers often go unmet.

Mediasafe perspective: Mentored youth groups are now forming in after school, church and civic group settings, to advance technology learning. Simoultaneously, community service learning has become a focus of school systems, as a furtherance of citizenship education curricula. These two grass roots themes can converge in volunteer activities that support local medias (cable systems, radio outlets, etc.) in their procurement of local caregivers' and self-help programs' outreach information. This community partnership can be accomplished at little or no cost to participating media outlets.

Mediasafe Mentors public interest information projects for youth can provide models for the development of future interactions between community volunteers and medias' commercial operations.

5) Internet accessibility

Detailed and far reaching information that can benefit Americans who seek resources to improve specific social problems in their lives is available on the Internet. Making the Internet accessible to low-income Americans has the potential to re-invent self-help, and personal responsibility, for many socially and economically distressed Americans.,

Mediasafe perspective: Public viewing TV monitors with Internet access are currently provided in many county library systems. Full utilization of this network, as well as, additional placements of Internet access, vis-a-vis, Mediasafe's Street TV project should be developed.